

REMARKS

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claim Amendments

Claims 5 and 7 have been amended to delete step (ii), i.e., “transferring a slurry comprising the resins of the mixed bed between demineralization columns and regeneration columns at a decreased slurry concentration”.

Claim of Priority

The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the comments regarding the Claim of Priority, as set forth on the first page of the response filed December 22, 2009. In short, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge the Claim of Priority and receipt of the priority document with the next correspondence.

Patentability Arguments

The patentability of the present invention over the disclosures of the references relied upon by the Examiner in rejecting the claims will be apparent upon consideration of the following remarks.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ito et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,633,624) in view of pages 1225-1229 of “Boiler Operating Engineering Questions and Answers” by P. Chattopadhyay and Voedisch (U.S. Patent 3,847,805).

Claims 5-8 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagiwara et al. (JP 2000-046992) in view of Voedisch.

In the Advisory Action, the Examiner disagrees with Applicants argument that Voedisch fails to disclose transferring the resin at a decreased concentration.

Although Applicants do not acquiesce to the Examiner's position, it is respectfully asserted that this position of the Examiner has been rendered moot by the above-discussed claim amendments.

Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that the subject matter of the amended claims is not rendered obvious by the cited combinations of references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the above-rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Therefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that each of the grounds of rejection set forth by the Examiner has been overcome, and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such allowance is solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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